

Remarks

The Official Action objects to use of the term "z-shape," which has been removed. The Official Action also refers to a need for "textual support" for the use of "ends." The undersigned is not aware of a specific requirement for "textual support," only that the specification describe the invention so that one of skill in the art can practice the invention. The drawings show the ends, and this is sufficient for one of skill in the art to practice the invention. Nevertheless, the specification has been amended to refer to the ends, without adding any new matter (support being found in Figure 2.)

The Official Action rejects the claims under §112, first paragraph. The removal of "z-shape" is believed to overcome this rejection. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 6-7, 9, 11-12, and 15-19 were rejected as anticipated by ROEBROEKS WO 02/078950. Claim 8 was rejected as unpatentable over ROEBROEKS and claim 10 was rejected further in view of LAMBING 5,160,771. The claims have been amended and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The Official Action interprets ROEBROEKS so that one of the metal layers is the fill layer. This does not seem appropriate as this interpretation means that a same component is identified by two names, one name being the metal layer 2 and the other name

being "a fill." It is not believed that one of skill in the art would take this approach; recall that the claims are to be interpreted by one of skill in the art. In any event, the amendments to claims 1 and 17 avoid this interpretation by expressly stating that the fill is not one of the metal layers previously defined in the claims. Accordingly, the claims avoid the rejections under §102 and §103.

New claim 20 has been added and consideration and allowance of the new claim is respectfully requested. Support for the overlapping zone mentioned in the new claim is found in Figure 2 that shows this zone between the opposing ends of fill pieces 24 and 25. ROEBROEKS does not disclose the claimed overlapping zone, where the fill is outside this zone.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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